

**ABSTRACT**

5 A filter assembly including a filter element retained within the central core of the element with a C-shaped retaining ring. The retaining ring is located in an internal annular groove in one end cap. The other end of the support core is supported against the opposite end cap, or an additional retaining ring can be provided. When the element is spent, the element is removed from the housing, the retaining ring and central support core are removed, and the element is disposed of in an appropriate manner (preferably by crushing and incineration). The support core is then inserted into a replacement/fresh element and held in place by the ring.